

Sinclair and its anti-Kerry documentary is the quintessential reason why relaxation of the rules preventing media consolidation were and are a fundamental weakening of our democratic system.

I had my first job in radio (a small independent station in a small town) and we were all keenly aware of our responsibilities for balanced news and commentary, and that our license was a public trust, not a right of the station owners to do whatever they wished.

We had to give "equal time" to all major and many minor voices. It always made me feel proud that though our station was owned by a wealthy Oklahoma oilman with many incentives to bias coverage heavily in favor of his own political agenda, in fact and instead, we had marching orders to always balance things out, if for no other reason than to insure that the station's license would not be challenged. And we were one of only two stations in the entire area of several hundred square miles. We had a solemn responsibility to ensure every side got aired.

The current licensing rules allowing big aggregations of

media ownership,
especially in the
same markets,
stifles the very
voice of a truly
free people.

We have station
owners, some from
foreign lands with
an ownership
position, who push
their own agenda
exclusively or
nearly so, with a
huge voice
commensurate with
their investment and
financial power, not
with their
requirement to keep
the public airways
for the ultimate
benefit of the
public.

Frankly, folks, it
sucks. It makes much
of what I grew up
thinking was really
great about this
country a mockery
and a sham.

Please, please,
please! Restore the
public airways to
the previous
position, where all
voices were heard
and news was news,
and commentary was
clearly labeled as
commentary. I am sad
for our country what
the FCC has done,
and embarrassed at
the sale of one of
our most precious
assets to the
highest bidders. Our
friends (and
enemies) abroad see
us as hypocrites
when we lecture them
on our "democratic"
leadership. I'd like
to see more BBC and
less ABC, not
referring to the
literal owners, but
to a style that
presents balance and
broad range of
opinions, and news

that's really
journalistically
fair and balanced,
not commentary and
propaganda that's
called "news" but
isn't really news at
all.

Also, while we're at
it, I'm quite upset
by what's happened
with such things as
the Janet Jackson
escapade and Howard
Stern. Candidly,
folks, I could care
less if Janet
Jackson has a pasty
clad boob showing
on TV for less than
a second or whether
Howard Stern uses
foul language. I'm
definitely not a fan
of either
individual, but
putting FCC energy
into either of
these, when I have
to see people
sorting cockroaches
from worms (tonight
on Channel 13 in Los
Angeles on another
stupid "reality
show" - an oxymoron
if there ever was
one) or cheating
their way through
one after another
such shows (and
being rewarded for
unfair play and
aggressive,
mean-spirited
interactions with
fellow contestants)
to be even the
slightest bit
concerned about the
use of "bad
language" or showing
of flesh on-screen.
Frankly, I'm
beginning to believe
the FCC is run by a
group of hysterical,
puritanical
adolescents whose
sense of proportions
and propriety are
severely out of
whack.

Be assured I'm not alone in my opinion. Many people are working hard to avoid the airwaves and even the newspapers and magazines in favor of blogs, web sites, and the like. In our home, we've dropped our subscription to cable TV and other than watching the 11 o'clock news, Nightline, and some programs like Meet the Press, and some PBS stuff, we just get our information from more varied and more trustworthy (at least less likely to be controlled by Big Business interests). And, by the way, Janet Jackson and Howard Stern are pretty tame compared to what most kids (and the rest of us) see in their emails every single day - spam advertising (often quite graphical) pornography, organ enhancers for both sexes, etc.

So please, stop with the heavy handed censorship and let's get back to diversity - real diversity - that I remember from my childhood when a single entity could own no more than seven AM, seven FM, and seven TV stations in the entire country, and newspaper owners had additional restrictions.

Now in Los Angeles we have one major newspaper (ONE!!!), and where AM. FM and TV stations are no longer nearly as diverse as 50 years

ago!

Please admit that
the FCC has made
some colossal
blunders and then,
like real adults,
not adolescents
pretending to be
delicate little
flowers with ears
that singe at the
first mention of a
four letter word
that can be heard
liberally used on
any schoolyard every
day by the very
children whom you
profess to protect
and get us back to a
place where control
of our public
airways is no longer
concentrated in the
hands of a few
moguls who could
care less about what
we really want to
hear and see, and
whose personal
politics precludes
airing anything that
remotely resembles
the old equal time
requirement.

Yech!